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FEBRUARY
1940

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PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY
The San Diego Floral Association
ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO
P. O. Box 323, San Diego, Calif.

Roland S. Hoyt, Editor
John D. Wimmer, Assoc. Editor

February, 1940
Vol. 31 **No. 8**

Entered as second-class matter December 8, 1910, at the Post Office at San Diego, California, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

California Garden is on the list of publications authorized by the San Diego Retail Merchants Association

Rates on Request

Advertising Copy should be in by the 25th of preceding month.

Subscription to Magazine, $1.00 per year; Membership $1.50 per year; Magazine and Membership combined, $2.00 per year.

Meeting held third Tuesday of each month at Floral Building, Balboa Park, 7:30 P. M.

Toft Printing Co., 1129 2nd St., San Diego

A Regional Look at Garden Books

By ETHEL BIXBY LEACH

From the eastern seaboard to the northwest; from the middlewest and the southwest, and all the places in between, come the seekers after beauty to San Diego, the city that reaches from the mountains to the sea, the city of homes and gardens. They come in the winter and return for the summer, and always San Diego is a blooming garden.

To have a garden, large or small, in this land of sunshine, is the dream of all who come, but they are bewildered by the varied, and often times strange flowers, the shrubs and trees, and the idiosyncrasies of the soil. Everything is so different than it is "back home." Even the blooming seasons seem all awry. For advice in their perplexities they come to the Public Library, where they think they will find all the answers. What to give these seekers after truth and beauty that is applicable to our conditions is often a very complex problem. In the not so distant past there was a great scarcity of books to guide either the amateur gardener or the experienced landscape architect. It was a problem of experimentation, which involved sad mistakes and glorious results.

The great majority of garden books found upon the shelves of a public library are written by easterners for eastern conditions of soil and climate, and about trees, shrubs and flowers that thrive with the changing seasons. Of course, for years, we have had those excellent books by John McClaren "Gardening in California, Landscape and Flower," and Sydney B. Mitchell "Gardening in California, a Guide for the Amateur on the Pacific Slope," but they are books written by men familiar with conditions in and about San Francisco and the peninsula.

"The Flowers and Gardens of Madeira" by Florence DuCane and "Gardening in Sunny Lands, the Riviera, California, Australia," by Alice Martineau, are mostly descriptive, not practical enough for the man who wants to dig into the soil, plant his own seeds and cuttings, and watch his flower children grow and thrive. The becoming more conscious of the need for guidance and the possibilities of adaptations to California conditions of many foreign species, has led to the publication of several books lately, which have been welcomed with open arms by the librarians, and have been grappled with hooks of steel and held possessively to the bosom of many a gardener.

The first problem to be considered is, of course, the garden plan. Recently two very excellent books have been published, "Garden Design" by Marjorie Coutley, and "Garden Planning and Building," by H. Stuart Ortloff. "Garden Design" is an excellent book for the amateur gardener who wants to bring artistry and harmony out of the tangle of growing things that all too easily get beyond him. The fundamentals of scale, proportion, rhythm, transition, harmony, contrast and balance are here presented simply, with plenty of cuts to illustrate the points of the author. The chapters on color are of particular value and interest, especially the one on foliage plants classified according to color, and texture. Also listed are trees and shrubs suitable for background, arbor, wall coverings, borders and screens to harmonize into a complete picture. "Garden Planning and Building" is not just another book on gardening, but a practical volume that can be recommended to the amateur who is about to see his dream come true in a backyard of one hundred and fifty feet or so or an estate of several acres. Selecting the site, placement of the house and development of the grounds to the completed whole are treated step by step by the author, who is a landscape architect of wide experience. Walls, fences, steps, pergolas, tool houses and guest houses, all important component parts of the gorden, which can be decorative as well as useful, are considered. The water garden, the rock garden, the play ground area and the ever increasingly popular wild and woodland gardens, luxuries of the large estate, are treated thoroughly and simply. Furnishing and lighting the garden is a very practical chapter emphasizing the care necessary in designing furniture and the placing of lighting fixtures.

What to plant in the garden after

it is planned, and where best to plant it is the next problem to be solved in this business of garden making. Of course, the outstanding and fundamental book for this region is Roland S. Hoyt's "Ornamental Plants for Sub-Tropical Regions." This book and the author need no introduction to San Diego gardeners. The author has done a monumental work for the cause of regional planting, and his book has become THE reference book both for identification of plants and as an authoritative guide to trees and shrubs best suited to the far south.

Not only landscape artchitects, but many horticulturists are becoming aware of this necessity for regional planting. Dr. Donald Wyman of the Arnold Arboretum has recently given us "Hedges, Screens, and Windbreaks." The value of this book for Californians is the index of zones in which the plant thrives best, and the regional studies includes a list for evrgreen hedges suitable for California.

As a companion to these books, Alfred C. Hottes "Book of Shrubs," is very much worthwhile. Although there is no regional arrangement, the author gives the natural habitat of many species, excellent descriptions and splendid illustrations.

Among the newer books of California interest are Lester Rowntree's "Hardy Californians" and "Flowering Shrubs of California and Their Value to the Garden." Both books deal with the native plants of California that cover the hills and the valleys from the High Sierras to the desert lands, and are personal experiences of the author in collecting and adapting to cultivation these wild natives. They are delightful books which fill the reader with an enthusiasm and a longing to go exploring and do some experimenting. The chapter on "how to grow them" is full of practical advice founded on the sad and happy experiences of the author in growing California wild flowers and shrubs.

Perhaps one of the most fascinating books is Cecille Hulse Matschat's "Mexican Plants for American Gardens." We in Southern California find the Mexican influence in our homes, decorations and gardens developing to a great extent, and here is the first book "to bring before the gardener plant materials of Mexico and enable him to choose that which is best adapted to his own purposes and to give full cultural directions for their care in gardens." A fascinating history of the early gardens and gardeners of Mexico sets the background of the book. From the xochichinamcalli of the Aztecs through the period following the conquest when the Spanish colonists brought their culture and their garden lore, so beloved by them, down to the modern patio, the outgrowth of Indian and Spanish influences, we follow the development of gardens. The cacti, the wild flowers, shrubs for pots and patios, foliage plants, the lianas, have all been considered in this book with the idea of adaptation to American gardens. The author has given cultural directions, horticultural uses to which the plants are best adapted and the sections of the United States in which they will thrive best

"South African Plants for American Gardens" by Sarah V. Coombs, and "Gardens of South Africa" by Dorothea Fairbridge are companion books which bring to our attention some idea of the flowering beauty beyond the Southern Cross. They stress the possibilities of plant introduction and cultivation in American gardens, especially California where it is said "the climate of parts of California is so much like that of South Africa with a desert back of the mountains and the fertile vegetation of the coast-belt." Sarah Coomb's book has given us extensive lists and descriptions of South African native and cultivated plants, and as we glance over the pages we find many familiar names of species already known to Southern California garden lovers. Dorothea Fairbridge's book is historical in nature. She gives us a picture of the early pioneers and their practical gardens. She takes us to the Cape and Transvaal, the High Veld and the Low Veld and shows how gardening is planned and carried on there.

Another book helpful to all southern gardeners is a little volume issued by the Forum of Civics of Houston, Texas, called "A Garden Book for Houston." Much that is grown in that part of the country can be raised here under the same treatment and under much the same climatic conditions. This is a very readable little book that appeals to the small-plot gardener, who likes the petunias, the pansies and the sweet peas. The chapters on propagation, pruning, soils and garden planning are very practical. There is a little chapter which is a direct plea for the use of botanical names (unusual advocation) which all lovers of flowers and gardens should read. As the author so aptly states "Just as music is a universal language understood in all lands alike, so Latin names given to plants mean the same the world over."

Ethel Bixby Leach,
San Diego Public Library

Out Over the Muirlands

Light of azure skies
Peace of hills
Songs of birds
Music of the surf
Whispers of leaves
In the softened light
Of the sunset glow
And stars at night.
The rainbow sheen
After sunlit showers
Strength of trees
Fragrance of the pine
Comfort of grass
Gentleness of the wild dove
Reflections all of God
For "God is Love."

—Mrs. W. C. Carter
From "Bonnie Brae"

Gardens East and West—Control

By LUCIA KERR

"East is east and west is west"—The gardener knows not which is best.

The gardens of the east are so much less under the control of man than is the case out here. Whether man will or no, the fall color comes and dances as gayly in his garden as it does on any untouched spot in the countryside. Of course, we have nothing to do with the sunshine, east or west, and we have nothing to do with the temperature but to admire and condemn. But in California man plays the role of a rain god, who can with-hold the supply in his reservoirs and reproduce the desert, or, with plants which he has placed in shaded and protected areas, recreate the tropics by drenching them daily. In the east the rainfall is regular and quite heavy, being some forty inches, and while man may entice a few more leaves and flowers with his sprinkler and keep the lawn green for a bit longer than is nature's plan, he cannot alter conditions greatly.

In this area, speaking very, very generally, the only plant groups which we cannot grow, even with the greatest care, are those which require intense winter cold. In the east, and (again remember that I am speaking very broadly), the only plants that can be grown are those which can acclimate themselves to even rainfall, great heat in the summer, and winter temperatures considerably below the freezing point—one condition in the former case and three in the latter.

Always in the east the cultivated garden and the natural countryside are in tune, and there is a sameness in seasonal characteristics between the woodland and the back yard. Here in California the attitude is much like that of the Arab, who lives in a dry hot land. Perhaps he loves the arid place, but he comes home to the garden he has created which is well watered, fresh and green. It would not do to say that we seek relief from the sun, but we do like a contrast to the lovely warm brown which it has achieved on our hillsides. All year long our gardens are green; dull green, sprightly or opulent green, but always green in contrast to our hillsides which most of the year are brown. Only at one season are the gardens and the natural scene in tune, and that is when rain gives to the hillsides sufficient water to equal this perennial green of the cultivated, man-made garden.

There is nothing that the eastern gardener can do to effect apparent unconsciousness of seasonal change. No more than he can have colorful flowers in the back of his perennial border in March, can he ignore the exciting pace of life in the fall or the dormant period of winter. Of course, theoretically, he could have an evergreen garden with the needles and the broad leaves. But broad leaved evergreens in the east mean Rhododendrons, Azaleas, laurel, and a few more of the ericacious group, which, with the exception of the Callunas and Ericas, are heavy in form and texture. It would be a massive garden of dull foliage, with dull contrasts, and only a momentary flash of color in the spring. Think what evergreen means out here!

Rare Opportunity

The first garden tour to Hawaii from the Pacific Coast region will take place this spring when garden lovers from all over the West will band together to see all the garden spots of interest on the islands. Hawaiian flowers and gardens will be at their height during this time.

Heading the group is Leslie Layton, well-known garden lecturer and garden editor of the San Francisco Chronical. In private life Miss Layton is Mrs. Norvell Gillespie wife of the garden editor of Sunset magazine. She will lead the group to the garden spots on the islands, will introduce them to many famous Hawaiian horticulturalists, and will give garden talks illustrated by a vast supply of natural color slides.

The party leaves on the Lurline May 9 from San Francisco and will arrive in Honolulu May 15. Headquarters will be the Royal Hawaiian Hotel. The group will travel around the isle of Oahu visiting Cooper's Ranch, home of the famous hibiscus hybridizer, the University of Hawaii where they will be led around the grounds by a botanist; historically famous Nuuanu Pailli; the coral gardens of Haleiwa and Kaneche, and the beach setlements of Kailua, Lani-Kai, and Houula. Best of all, the party will have access to the gardens of many of the large private estates and will visit as many of them as time will permit.

- Overnight trips wil be made to the islands of Hawaii and Kawai. On the island of Hawaii they will visit the beautiful Hawaiian National Park which boasts many interesting forms of plant life, and the city of Hilo, famous for its gardens. On Kawai, which is known as the Garden Isle, they will make an expedition to Lawai Beach, a private estate and one of the world's most famous landscaped gardens. They will also tour Waimea Canyon, Hanapepe Valley, Barking Sands, and Kukuilono Park.

The party will leave Honolulu May 24 on the S.S. Matsonia to arrive back in San Francisco May 30. This trip is especially designed for garden lovers and will enable them to see the most at the least expense. Further details and a copy of the itinerary may be obtained by writing to Leslie Layton, 1523 Vancover Ave., Burlingame, Calif.

* * *

Few beauty lovers and garden enthusiasts will fail to thrill to this thought. We hope many of our people, in searching out a satisfactory substitute for European travel this summer may read the above notice, again, and seriously. Can you afford at this time to miss such a trip—congenial company—competent leadership — a marvelous floral experience. —R.S.H.

COMPLICATIONS and COMMENT

Call this chitter, but not tattle—call it it gossip, call it prattle—
But whate'er may be its name, call it fun—
This garden game!

Poinsettias are most sensitive and almost every where are a wreck, but plants unharmed. In some cases blooms only 1 foot apart were "one taken, the other left" just the tiniest overhanging of any shelter or a chance for wind sweep makes the difference.

Since San Diego is now waking up to the fact that in the Poinsettia we have something which is ours exclusively—did you ever study the big center of the blossom and notice those orange colored tiny cups on the side of each little green floret with its red tip. They are Nectar glands—found also in some other plants, but so very pronounced in this case that one notices and wonders. These florets are of 2 sexes. Saunders in Trees and Shrubs of California says "the numerous males (which consist of one stamen each) are bunched about the solitary female which consists of a single pistil, and which as though conscious of the impropriety of a lone female dwelling with such a multitude of the opposite sex, soon lifts itself by a lengthening footstalk to a place quite outside." The whole formation is interesting and worthy of a few moments' study.

And Poinsettias are so easily grown—cut off some of those long stalks and use them as stakes for any plant which needs support. In the fall you will have a gorgeous big blossom with no effort beyond the water and fertilizer you gave the other plant. Do not cut the stalks until ripe—probably about March—depending on the weather.

—B. M. T.

ADOBE BECOMES FRIABLE

Some one has said: "There are just 15 minutes in a year in which adobe can be worked satisfactorily." Be that as it may—adobe surely presents a stiff problem to a novice in California gardening.

The ground is hard and dry. It has been weeks, perhaps months, since rain fell. So proceed with care and patience, if you wish that flower bed to be receptive for those interesting seeds you want to sow.

The day before real work begins, be sure to irrigate the selected space.

A sharp pickax and a sturdy spading fork, if applied with energy and persistence, will eventually break adobe into lumps or clods. A generous sprinkling should follow; then immediately scatter gypsum lightly over this dampened surface. Let stand overnight. The following morning work the ground again. Once more sprinkle; now scatter sharp edged sand over entire spaded surface. In a few hours the adobe is easily made friable by the use of a chopping hoe and rake.

To keep this redeemed soil from packing and hardening again; work clean bean or pea vine straw thoroughly into the entire spaded ground. Sow your seed or put in the plants; water as needed; California sunshine and an occasional cultivation will abundantly reward you. Roses flourish here as they never will in sandier soil.—M.B.M.

PLANT FOR SAFETY

In order not to endanger the lives of playing children and their strolling elders, it is suggested that planters place their bushes where they will not obstruct the clear view of traffic. This involves plantings at corners of blocks, at driveway entrances or anything that is placed in the parking. The driver as well as the person on foot should have a clear and unobstructed view anywhere, especially on curves and the sharper the curve, the more important the consideration.

An appalling number of children are injured or killed yearly by running out from behind obstructions in play, so that the larger responsibility must rest with the automobile driver. The children under play conditions are naturally thoughtless and we must not intensify any factors that lead to dangerous situations.

A. L. Potter,
Independence, Kansas

MINA LOBATA

Seed planting of the annuals is at hand for February, excepting the Heavenly blue Morning Glory and its relative, the Mina lobata; they should not be planted until late in March or early April. Every garden should have a plant of this extra fine and beautiful Morning Glory which lasts until late fall. The Mina lobata make a slender vine with attractive yellow and red flower spikes 6 inches long and is useful for cutting. The humming birds are fond of it.

Give it a string or two to climb to the top of some tall shrub or the limb of a tree; several plants would be better than only one—for any garden. —K. O. S.

SEEDLING DAHLIAS

Growing dahlias from seeds is one of the most fascinating phases of dahlia culture; each seed produces a new variety and this is the part which delights even the most professional dahlia grower. However, let it be understood that the final outcome depends entirely on the type of seed used in planting. It is necessary that seeds be collected only from the finest varieties and that during the time flowers are permitted to go to seed all poor specimens be destroyed, singles not be allowed to bloom and miniatures as well as pompoms be cut long before a seed-pod is visible in the center of the flower. It must be remembered that bumble and other bees carry the pollen from one seed pod to another and that the pollen from a poor, single or small flower transferred to those of magnificent species, has its detrimental effect.

Seeds may be planted in the open or in boxes (flats). In California this may be done about March first. Select an open sunny location. spade in a modest quantity of vaporite and rake soil well. 10 days later make a trench with your finger or a stick ½ inch deep; plant seeds 2 inches apart; cover trench care-

(Continued on Page 9)

AN OPEN LETTER TO KATE SESSIONS

Dear Miss Sessions:

We, who have been accustomed to turning first to your column in this magazine, there to enjoy and profit by your wisdom, do now salute you!

We have missed you much at all our garden meetings, but your name always comes up in praise or quotation, so you are with us whether you know it or not. We are so thankful that you are recuperating in what is really record time for cases like yours. Slow as it seems, while waiting, it is encouraging to know you will soon speak to us as before, both in person and through these pages.

Meanwhile the tables have been turned and you have been taken from the outdoor garden where you throve so happily. You have been, as you probably feel, "savagely pruned," and are now sequestered in the lath-house, sheltered and cared for, devotedly.

It must be a very wise nurseryman who has brought you through so successfully and no one knows better than yourself what patience it takes to wait for a plant to mend, nor how glad the gardener is when he sees the object of his attention responding happily to the rest and technical care necessary for its progress.

You realize what happens to lath-house subjects. They become so lovely and exotic that everyone makes a special trip to see these unusual specimens! (Perhaps you will burst forth as an exponent of fluffy ruffles or decide to go on a speaking tour, like Alexander Woollcott.) You were already a prize-winner, anyway, so there must be some very special development forthcoming; some delicate refinement out of the experience of pain, that will be new to the world that loves you.

Dear lady of medals, we wish you strength and courage and patience in this "dormant" stage and we all await the springtime of your return to us.

Floral Association and
Friends everywhere.

Gleanings From the Magazines

Ida Louise Bryant

BETTER HOMES AND GARDENS for February has an article on "The Best Single Garden Development in Years," namely Vitamin B1. The first popular account of what this mysterious substance had accomplished for some experimenting gardeners was written by H. Britton Logan, in the October number of this Des Moines magazine, and he goes on with the story in the current issue.

Sixty-five thousand letters had come, to date, in response to the article, to say nothing of twenty thousand directly to the California Institute of Technology, where the discovery that plants need vitamins, too, had been made. It has been proved beyond question that Vitamin B1 stimulates root growth by making the elements needed for growth more accessible, especially when it is applied to plants which do not manufacture enough of it themselves. It can't take the place of light, water, drainage or regular plant foods, but does make for healthy, vigorous roots; and as the plant is below ground, so it is above, we are told.

We agree with the author of this article that it seems utter nonsense to think that a speck of crystalline B1 in 20 gallons of water can pack such a wallop, as he puts it. Directions, with the package I tried, prescribed a bit of the powder as big as the head of a pin to be put into a tiny vial (enclosed) which was to be filled with water up to the mark etched on it. One drop of this solution used in each gallon of water to be required for watering seems an infinitesimal amount, to say the least. But when one thinks of it not as a drop, but as millions of molecules, and realizes that the formula for "thiamin chloride," another name for the substance, tells the chemist that in about ten ounces there are 10-23 molecules (10 with 23 zeros behind it), this whole new micro-food idea doesn't seem quite so fantastic. A year from now we'll probably know more about it.

"Best for 1940," in the same magazine, gives the most outstanding plants among recent introductions, the choices of a committee of twenty-four experts. Included are the new viburnum, Burkwoodi; new chrysanthemums, the "Pacific Giant" strain of delphiniums, the brilliant scarlet-pomponed shrub, Calliandra Tweedi — also called Inga pulcherrima — and eleven good annuals.

"How to Be a Grafter" might be a dismaying title for a reformer to choose upon, but amateur gardeners will fall on it with eagerness; it makes the process sound very simple and practicable.

The FLOWER GROWER for January also has material on Grafting, in the shape of excellent illustrations of the different methods in common use. "Seed Novelties in Review," in this issue should be helpful to the gardener on the lookout for something new.

HOUSE AND GARDEN for January has beautiful pictures in color illustrating its article on "Fuchsias, a fantasy in color." It speaks of their great attraction for humming birds, surely reason enough for planting them in every garden, if reason other than their beauty were needed. And speaking of humming birds, I have yet to see one risk its little self in the throats of the bignonia cherere blooms that lie so thickly on the roof; is it because those miraculously vibrating wings could not hold it up within the confines of the long, slender flower tube? The pair of Arizona Hooded Orioles that have built twice each season for the last five years in the huge clump of banana plants, next door, no doubt with a business-like eye on our plum and fig trees, have no such phobia about flower cups. They pierce them with one quick stab through the small end, next the stem, and in an instant have drawn out the nectar and have gone on to the next. Those needle-pointed, shiny black bills weren't evolved, it seems, solely for the sewing business.

According to the author of "Is Your Garden A Bromide?" it is,

when visitors tell you about their own triumphs instead of demanding, "WHAT is THAT, and WHERE did you get it?"

"The Saga of American Horticulture" gives the origin of many plants in common use, and tells of the struggles of the first collectors who transported plants by sailing vessels a hundred years or so ago. One of the early American growers was John Bartram, a farmer living near Philadelphia. He developed a huge business in exporting collections of plants to European countries, England in particular, about 1728. The author tells us that John Bartram's boxes never contained the same assortment twice, but the price was one and the same: five guineas each. He varied the shipments by enclosing novelties in each box, in the way of turtles, or snakes or butterflies or insects, and there was always the greatest curiosity to see what the chest contained. A curiosity, by the way, that is still functioning, but we call it plant inspection now.

House and Garden's Bookshelf reviews Lester Rowntree's new "Flowering Shrubs of California," and bears out the fine things our Editor said about it. It speaks of her beautiful photographs, and declares that there is not a dry, uninteresting page in her writings. "Hers for the Kitchen," by Mazza, sounds like an instructive book on herb cookery; it also tells which to plant, how to gather them, how not to use so many of them that the family revolts, and includes one of Ogden Nash's poetic masterpieces, entitled:

"My Dear, However Did You Think Up This Delicious Salad?"

SUNSET for January is a special Western garden issue, and is crammed to the covers with helpful gardening ideas. The article on Ornamental Trees for Western Gardens stresses our, Miss Sessions rule in recommending the planting of SMALL trees; the folk-saying reads: "Old men plant young trees. Young men plant old trees." Age has confidence, has learned to wait; youth is impatient and wants quick results.

Problems of the Soil . . . .

By R. R. McLEAN, County Agricultural Commissioner

OAK LEAF MOLD

Question: What danger would there be, if any, in using oak leaf mold around fruit trees? I have heard, in central California of fruit trees being killed by oak root fungus and do not want to risk using the leaf mold if it will convey the disease.—B. R.

Answer: Under favorable conditions it is probably possible to spread oak root fungus by means of leaf mold, but in this county we are practically free from the disease and there is no known case of its being conveyed in the manner indicated. During an agricultural experience of many years here, the writer has only known of three cases of oak root fungus on fruit trees in this county and in each case the disease was undoubtedly brought in from the outside, probably on trees already slightly infected. In central and north central California the favorite host of oak root fungus is the valley oak, this species being far more susceptible than is the common California live oak which is the principal oak in this county, although there are a number of others. The valley oak does not occur here as a native tree. It is the writer's opinion that there is no danger whatever in using leaf mold from oaks grown in the southern California area, inasmuch as our oaks, as far as known, are entirely free from this destructive disease.

JASMINE KNOT

Question: A yellow jasmine vine and a quince tree in my yard have many rough warts or galls all over the main stems. Can you tell me what causes this trouble and if there is any remedy? Will it spread to other plants?—G. H.

Answer: The diseases on these plants are very similar, although probably caused by different bacterial organisms. The quince knot disease is very common in California and few, if any, quince trees are entirely free from it. It is somewhat injurious in that it undoubtedly shortens the life of affected trees, but on the other hand heavily infected trees are often very heavy bearers. The only known remedy is to cut out the knots, where it is advisable or possible, and disinfect the cut places. For this purpose you can use a corrosive sublimate (bichloride of mercury) solution made by dissolving one tablet (7.3 grams) of bichloride of mercury in a pint of liquid composed of denatured alcohol 25 percent and water 75 percent. In addition to disinfecting the cut surfaces be sure to disinfect the knife or shears after each cut. The disease can be very easily transmitted from place to place by the pruning instrument if this is not done. If the wounds resulting from the operation are large they should be protected further, after disinfection, with a good tree paint of some sort, as asphalt paint, tree seal, etc.

The knots on jasmine are also quite common and probably affect the vigor of the vines to some extent. It is not practicable nor even possible to treat affected vines with any assurance of success.

The bacterial galls affecting quinces can be spread to closely related plants, probably, as apples, pears, etc., but in actual practice this very seldom happens unless the virus is conveyed to these plants by means of a pruning knife, shears, etc. The galls on jasmine are not likely to be carried to any other plants other than jasmines, so far as known to the writer.

DELAYED FOLIATION

Question: During some seasons my peaches do not leaf out properly. Last year I had no trouble but for at least three years previously they were very late in coming out and I had very little fruit. Can you tell me what the cause of this is? —G. F.

Answer: The condition referred to is known as delayed foliation and

is common to most deciduous fruit trees, under certain conditions, but in varying degrees. Perhaps peach trees are more susceptible than are other fruit trees.

Delayed foliation is the result of warm winters. Deciduous fruit trees, as a rule, require a certain rest period, varying with the kind of tree and to some extent with the variety of each, which prevents the buds from opening in a normal manner in the spring unless they have been exposed to a period of chilling. It is not necessary that freezing weather be experienced as temperatures just above freezing will also operate to break the rest period. It has been determined that if trees experience a mean temperature of 48 degrees for a period of two or three months during the winter, the buds will open at the proper time in the spring. If the mean temperature be above this figure, delayed foliation with its attendant troubles will likely result. Last winter was quite cold, as you no doubt remember, and as a result our deciduous fruit trees behaved in a normal manner. This present winter has been so very warm that it seems to be, at this time, quite doubtful if we will avoid considerable trouble with delayed foliation this coming spring.

Even after warm weather during the winter the buds will open, of course, but in an abnormal manner and a month or six weeks later. One interesting fact in connection with this is that after warm winters buds on trees that were in the shade during the winter, as on the north side of tall windbreaks, will open much earlier and in a more normal manner than the buds on trees that were in the sun.

Investigations have been under way for some years in an attempt to find some method of overcoming the effects of our warm weather during the winter. Considerable progress has been made, particularly in the breeding of strains of trees resistant to the effects of delayed foliation. Some sprays are also being developed to insure the more complete dormancy of susceptible trees.

Fresh Air From the Gardens

By ADA PERRY

Editor Hoyt has asked me nicely and "numerously" to explain why I persist in talking in a garden way over KGB (present time, Thursday afternoons at 2:15) . . . I have held forth for a long time under the logging of "Over the Garden Gate." And taking it "under and over", I have never wanted for material in all those programs . . . this is one of the best reasons why gardening is a good air subject . . . I call it fresh air in my title and it is fresh air—a change from other types of programs . . . Not that I don't approve of those types of programs . . But I do have an advantage over them . . . If you aren't a swing addict, you never listen to it . . . But at some time or other a swing addict is going to listen to a garden program and enjoy it—usually when said addict marries another . . . So home owners are air garden audiences . . . And so are apartment dwellers, because—they build garden air castles and enjoy them . . .

Now I'd be willing to believe that business men and women don't care a whoop about some informal garden chatting if so many of them didn't come right out and tell me that they are interested. . . It's part of their recreation. Do you know a bed of fine zinnias coming into bloom can start an office worker out happy for the day? . . .

Now, also, this is a motor age and Southern California is a motoring paradise. . . . You wouldn't think that had any bearing on chatting about plants over the radio—at first thought . . . But what do you motor through here—the minute you get outside your garage doors? . . . The world of plants, of course . . . It's all around you. It's what makes you get outdoors, more than likely . . . And even if you don't care whether a radish comes off a tree or a vine, you do see plants that you admire or wonder about . . . There are so many of them here, and so many of us have some interest in them because they're what makes life so enjoyable here . . . One of the things at any rate . . .

Another angle—gardening is becoming part of our national philosophy, because we're growing more mature, more stabilized . . .Exciting events in other parts of the world attract our human loves of excitement . . . But those peaceful half hours in the garden will do more for our nation's integrity than all the glowing speeches, I think . . . You can tell a man that developing his own business and his nation's integrety is his first lookout, but when he's building a home from the proceeds of that business and expects it to be protected by that nation he really understands what you mean . . .

From the seedsman's angle, a garden-influenced program has an advantage that shouldn't be overlooked . . . The standard garden joke among all who play in the sun and warm earth concerns the jaw-breaking names of flowers . . . And standard jokes have yet to hurt a business as a certain automobile manufacturer knows . . . The jokes will go on and even improve when I and others say those names over the air—but people are hearing those names as a contrast to jumbles of syllables which they skip over in print . . . Repeated often enough, they become part of vocabularies and no advertising man belittles that kind of circulation . . .

So I present to you what I believe is the general appeal of a garden breeze over the radio . . . If I look, I find for it philosophy, news, styles, gossip, humor, fellowship and —er—even puns! . . . It will take you outdoors to your petunia bed or to the far corners of the earth . . . Or it will bring outdoors in to you —even by such a humble messenger as that sanseviera plant in the dark hall corner . . .

PATRONIZE OUR ADVERTISERS

Adventures in Color

By FLORENE A. PIERCE

The rains came, and the wind "she blow some more." The garden had been looking very well, but the combination of wind and rain and the famous California sunshine working overtime, did things to the flowers.

One bit of the garden designed to produce yellow and blue, furnished many a surprise and some disappointments. To plant seeds described as clear blue or golden yellow and then have flowers of lavender or flaming orange, is disconcerting, to say the least. However, it is a lot of fun, with a certain verve and inspiration resulting, when one experiments. Didn't someone say "as deceptive as a seed catalogue"?

Ageratum Blue Star was one of the blues to appear as a decided lavender. This happened also in the case of the Blue Lace Flower. Yellow, it would seem, is more easily managed.

Lobelia made a nice border of blue and dependably, with here and there a plant of the little yellow-blossomed succulent known commonly as lovers-knot. Cynoglossum was especially good filling in among yellow calendula and the marigold Yellow Supreme. The blue of delphinium is always a joy, but my snails seem to have such a fondness for the young plants that it is sometimes a question who is being served by this oldfashioned flower. Early in the season a small yellow narcissus and the blue Dutch-iris condescend to bloom at the same time in harmony above and apparent happiness below at the bulb.

Beneath a genista bush, a group of pansies, those oldsters called Ladies Delight by the quaint old lady, my neighbor in New England, come and go nor know of the battle royal being waged above with worms

Alyssum saxatile is exceptionally good for a mass of yellow. Anagallis gives a bright blue flower, but the plant becomes rather shabby as the season advances and should be pinched back to draw out over a longer period. Phacelia is also a good blue. Coreopsis Golden Wave fills in and its season of bloom is long. For background I have used genista and a small, pale yellow lantana with a group of agapanthus to bring out these somewhat pallid tones. Oldfashioned Bachelors-buttons, variety Jubilee Gem was a mass of bright blue and a few plants of bright yellow chrysanthemums with it, gave a late blooming. A few white flowers scattered about the bed added lightness as did the foliage of the artemisia Silver King in both color and texture.

One of the ventures for next year will be the carnation Grenadin-White Gold, described as soft yellow and sweet scented.

This planter follows no set rule in the garden, as bulbs, shrubs, annuals, perennials and what you will have been used, the object being to attain a blaze of color throughout the season, no matter how produced, but always with the surprise element and the thought—next year the garden will be a better one.

We mortals need beauty and kindliness and happiness and gardening of itself can and will provide all three if we but expose ourselves to its healing influence.

Florence A. Pierce

NEXT MEETING
Tuesday, February 20
A three way discussion of garden making.
Design - Layout
W. Allen Perry
Initial and Ultimate Operations
Eric E. Eastman
Use of Plant Materials
Roland S. Hoyt

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SEEDLING DAHLIAS

(Continued from Page 4)

fully and flatten down; spread a layer of peatmoss or leafmold ¼ inch thick and water lightly. Keep ground moist by sprinkling with a water can every second and later on every third day. Some seeds sprout within 2 weeks, others take longer. However when 4 to 5 inches above the ground, showing at least 3 sets of leaves, the plants are ready for transplanting.

Seeds can be started in flats exactly the same way as in the open. Many people, before planting seedlings in the open, transfer them first into a small pot and from there finally place them in the open ground, using about the same procedure as in the handling of tubers. It takes about 3 years for a seedling to become established, i.e., if the seedling acts the same for 3 years one may say that it has been established. Protect seedlings at their early stage from snails, slugs and cutworms. This may best be done by watering plants in the eve-evening.

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